DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 245 207 CS 007 694

TITLE Testing and Evaluation in Reading and Communication Skills: Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in "Dissertation Abstracts International," January through June 1984, (Vol. 44 Nos. 7 through 12).

INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.

PUB DATE 84

NOTE 13p.; Pages may be marginally legible.

PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Annotated Bibliographies; Attitude Measures; *Communication Skills; Computer Assisted Instruction; Doctoral Dissertations; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Minimum Competency Testing; Nonverbal Communication; Predictive Validity; Reading Attitudes; *Reading Comprehension; Reading Instruction; *Reading Research; *Reading Tests; Remedial Reading; State Programs; *Test Reliability; *Test Validity

ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 20 titles deal with a variety of topics, including the following: (1)learning literacy skills in a remedial reading classroom; (2) the development of an observation instrument designed to classify specific nonverbal communication techniques used by conductors of musical ensembles; (3) reading comprehension instruction in microcomputer reading programs; (4) the perceived reading skill needs of community college students as determined by content area faculty; (5) the validity and reliability of the preschool student's bookhandling knowledge task; (6) the relationship between selected learner variables and instruction by student teachers and reading achievement on the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills; (7) measuring the acquisition of reading skills in the first grade; (8) assessment of attitudes that educators, students, and parents have toward certain potentially censorable topics found in adolescent literature; (9) a comparison of sixth grade Thai and American students on two forms of the cloze procedure; (10) English teacher concerns about minimal competency testing graduation requirements; and (11) the effects of computer mediated text and reader study behavior on measures of reading comprehension. (FL)

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Testing and Evaluation in Reading and Communication Skills:

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Compiled by the Staff
of the
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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Baker, Margie Faye
READING PROFICIENT DISCRIMINATION DERIVED FROM DEFINITIONS OF READING BASED ON A NATIONAL SURVEY OF MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTS FROM ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-THREE URBAN DISTRICTS--GRADE SIX

Bertrand, Nancy Parks
A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF LEARNING LITERACY SKILLS IN A REMEDIAL READING CLASSROOM

Berz, William Lee
THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT DESIGNED TO CLASSIFY SPECIFIC NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION TECHNIQES EMPLOYED BY CONDUCTORS OF MUSICAL ENSEMBLES

Bradley, Virginia Nock
READING COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION IN MICROCOMPUTER READING PROGRAMS

Cortina, Joseph
A DELPHI STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED READING SKILL NEEDS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS AS DETERMINED BY COMMUNITY COLLEGE CONTENT AREA FACULTY

Cuvo, Marlene J.
AN EXAMINATION OF VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE PRE-SCHOOLERS' BOOK HANDLING KNOWLEDGE TASK

Erwin, Barbara Kay
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELECTED LEARNER VARIABLES AND INSTRUCTION BY STUDENT TEACHERS AND READING ACHIEVEMENT ON THE TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF BASIC SKILLS. [RECORD OF STUDY]

Evans, Martha Coffin
CALIFORNIA'S PROFICIENCY LEGISLATION AND THE HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH CURRICULUM: A QUESTION OF IMPACT

Gygi, Janice Lemmon
MEASURING THE ACQUISITION OF READING SKILLS IN FIRST GRADE

Hawk, Jane Ward
THE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF THE HAWK ADOLESCENT LITERATURE ATTITUDE SCALE: ASSESSMENT OF ATTITUDES THAT EDUCATORS, STUDENTS, AND PARENTS HAVE TOWARD CERTAIN POTENTIALLY CENSORABLE TOPICS FOUND IN LITERATURE READ BY ADOLESCENTS

Ingule, Frank Oyungu
USING THREE FORMATS OF THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL TO DETERMINE THE MOST RELIABLE FORMAT OF THE TECHNIQUE AMONG KENYAN AND AMERICAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN AND INVESTIGATE THE DIMENSIONALITY OF THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD READING

Knight, Leland Stanford
SHORT AND LONG-TERM RETENTION OF SIGHT WORDS BY FIRST GRADE STUDENTS TAUGHT BY TEACHER ASSISTANTS WHO HAD BEEN TRAINED BY LECTURE-DISCUSSION, PEER TEACHING, AND INDEPENDENT STUDY

Kroen, William Charles, Jr.
A DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS TO PERFORMANCE ON MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTS IN READING AND MATHEMATICS

Loangsitongsoog, Siriporn
A COMPARISON OF SIXTH GRADE THAI AND AMERICAN STUDENTS ON TWO FORMS OF THE CLOZE PROCEDURE: REGULAR CLOZE, SYNONYMIC CLOZE

Melton, Lynda Gayle White
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS LOCATED IN THE FIVE BASAL READERS ADOPTED BY THE STATE OF TEXAS

Minton, Marilyn Joy
A STUDY OF THE READING COMPETENCY GRADUATION TESTS IN SIXTEEN DISTRICTS IN A COUNTY IN CALIFORNIA

Reinking, David Paul
THE EFFECTS OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED TEXT AND READER STUDY BEHAVIOR ON MEASURES OF READING COMPREHENSION

Roark, Victoria Vischan
ENGLISH TEACHER CONCERNS ABOUT MINIMAL-COMPETENCY-TESTING GRADUATION REQUIREMENT: CURRICULAR IMPACT

Sullivan, Vicki Gallo
STANDARDIZATION OF THE CLOZE READING INVENTORY AS A MEASURE OF READING COMPREHENSION IN THE ODD GRADES 3 THROUGH 11

Zecchini, Sandra
A STUDY OF THE PREDICTIVE VALUE OF THE DIAGNOSTIC READING SCALES AND THE WOODCOCK READING MASTERY TESTS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL BASAL PLACEMENT

READING PROFICIENT DISCRIMINATORS DERIVED FROM DEFINITIONS OF READING BASED ON A NATIONAL SURVEY OF MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTS FROM ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-THREE URBAN DISTRICTS - GRADE SIX

Order No. DA8405365

BAKER, MARGIE FAYE, ED.D. *University of San Francisco*, 1983. 463pp. Chairperson: S. Alan Cohen, Ed.D.

This investigation, which consisted of three substudies, researched the national status of competency-based reading instruction at four grade levels: kindergarten, grade three, grade six, and grade eleven.

The first substudy surveyed the status of competency-based reading comprehension instruction in 133 urban districts. Competencies and test items that these districts were using in their reading comprehension curricula at the sixth-grade level were obtained.

Substudy # 2 submitted the competencies and test items in use to experts in the field of reading for evaluation of relevance or irrelevance to sixth-grade reading.

In the third substudy, the evaluated test items were formulated into a criterion referenced test and administered to 100 sixth-grade students in an urban middle school.

It was found upon testing the students that several of the expert-evaluated criterion referenced test items emerged as discriminators between proficient and less-proficient readers. The test items that received good evaluations from the experts tended to be those that better readers performed well on.

It was also found that districts, reading experts, and student discriminators of good reading aligned, indicating significant agreement relative to competencies considered crucial for mastery at grade six.

The study indicated that approximately 70% of the urban districts studied were mandated by state legislatures and/or state and local boards of education to implement competency-based reading programs with minimum competency testing to insure literacy of high school graduates.

Most districts had not defined minimal competencies but were testing for them using commercial and district-developed tests. The tests, in general, were poorly constructed, according to the experts. However, when a subset of the district test items was administered to the 100 sixth-grade subjects, the items were found to be able to discriminate adequately between good and poor readers.

This finding indicates that a good criterion referenced test may not necessarily be able to discriminate good from poor readers. However, its priority is to measure mastery of reading behaviors and not to discriminate. On the other hand, a test of poor quality may be quite capable of discriminating but may not measure the mastery of reading competencies. Test developers and users need to take a serious look at this critical issue.

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF LEARNING LITERACY SKILLS IN A REMEDIAL READING CLASSROOM Order No. DA8403486

BERTRAND, NANCY PARKS, PH.D. *The Ohio State University*, 1983. 286pp. Adviser: Professor Martha L. King

The purpose of this study was twofold: (1) to completely describe a classroom especially designed to foster literacy, and (2) to describe in detail relationships between reading and writing instruction and the children's learning of the skills of literacy. Special attention was given to the learning events that contributed to the children's reading development, the particular reading behaviors that were related to their becoming readers, and the observed reading behaviors in relation to their acknowledged uses of reading and writing.

This descriptive research effort was based in a second grade CLEAR classroom in a mid-sized Midwestern city. CLEAR classrooms were established by the school district to provide remedial literacy instruction to children in kindergarten through grade six. Specifically, the study was designed to investigate how the reading events that occurred in a particular CLEAR classroom influenced the reading progress of the children involved.

Seven second grade children and the CLEAR classroom teacher served as the subjects of the study.

In this study, detailed written notes of classroom observation, interviews of each of the subjects, and verbatim protocols were analyzed in conjunction with data gathered from standardized test scores, scores on the concepts About Print Survey: *Sand* (Clay, 1979), and Clay's (1979) running record analysis. These were used to compile a literacy profile of each child that provided examples of metalinguistic awareness and confusion exhibited by each child. The data were used to describe the context in which the literacy instruction occurred.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT DESIGNED TO CLASSIFY SPECIFIC NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED BY CONDUCTORS OF MUSICAL ENSEMBLES

Order No. DA8400532

BERZ, WILLIAM LEE, PH.D. *Michigan State University*, 1983. 205pp.

The purpose of this study was to develop an instrument designed to classify observed nonverbal communication behaviors made by conductors of musical ensembles. The basic outline of instrument development followed the seven-channel framework of nonverbal communication as detailed by Burgoon and Saine (1978): kinesics, physical appearance, vocalics, haptics, chronemics, proxemics, and artifact use.

The rehearsals of fifteen conductors representing a wide range of performance settings were videotaped. The tapes were analyzed with repeated playings; detected behaviors were written on cards. After intense review, the cards were grouped according to similarity of observed behavior and compared with behavior lists which had been developed through an examination of existing instruments and selected conducting texts. A two-part instrument was developed from these behavior groupings. The first part was a multicategory, time-sampling system accounting for non-static behaviors; the second part was a checklist system, accounting for static behaviors. Interviews were held with conductors and music educators to evaluate certain facets of the instrument. Duplications within the system were eliminated, after which time the Music Conductor Observation Instrument (MCOI) was in its final form.

Three graduate students at Michigan State University participated in determining the inter-observer reliability of the MCOI. With very little orientation into the use of the system, the observers coded a specially prepared tape, which employed stop-action but was otherwise unedited. Reliability estimates were determined by comparing the codings of each observer with those of the originator of the instrument through use of the Scott Formula; mean estimates of .69, .72, and .76 were achieved. A field trial was conducted to evaluate the instrument's practicality.

The study concluded that the MCOI was a viable means of classifying the nonverbal communication behaviors of conductors of musical ensembles. It was also concluded that observers familiar with the nature of conducting were able to use the system but that a more detailed training process than that used in the present study should be employed. The instrument's use was deemed practical. The MCOI was recommended for use in research investigating the nature of conductors' nonverbal communication.

READING COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION IN MICROCOMPUTER READING PROGRAMS

Order No. DA8402536

BRADLEY, VIRGINIA NOCK, PH.D. *University of Maryland*, 1983. 159pp. Supervisor: Dr. Linda B. Gambrell

The purpose of this research was to describe the approaches to reading comprehension instruction taken by the commercial producers of four microcomputer reading programs. A second purpose was to describe the surface features of the programs. Two scales were developed and validated, one of which was used to analyze the instructional format of the programs to determine the percentage of the total program devoted to each of 10 categories of reading instruction. Three of the designated categories constituted comprehension instruction; the remaining seven were related to comprehension instruction but were not considered direct comprehension instruction. The second scale was used to assess the surface features of the programs including the documentation and the instructional design. The two scales were applied to a random sample of 38 lessons from the Basic Learning Systems Tutorcourses; the Control Data Basic Reading Program; the Random House Tutorial Comprehension Series; and the Scott Foresman Reading Skills Courseware Series.

Percentages of each program devoted to each of the 10 instructional categories--*Preparation for instruction, Instruction, Practice, Feedback, Feedback with instruction, Review, Assessment, Assignment, Silent reading*, and *Other* were calculated. Chi-square statistics were computed to determine if there was a relationship between program and amont of comprehension instruction. Analysis of variance for one-way design was employed to compare surface features.

The major findings of the study can be summarized as follows: (1) The programs differ significantly in the amont of comprehension instruction they offer with Random House and BLS having the most such instruction. Control Data had the third largest amount of comprehension instruction, and the Scott Foresman program had the least. (2) All of the programs rated high in terms of their surface features with Scott Foresman having significantly more surface features than the other three programs.

A DELPHI STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED READING SKILL NEEDS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS AS DETERMINED BY COMMUNITY COLLEGE CONTENT AREA FACULTY

Order No. DA8327020

CORTINA, JOSEPH, ED.D. *North Texas State University*, 1983. 181pp.

This study determined the reading skills that community college faculty perceived as necessary for their students' success in certain English, history, and biology courses. Three questions were posed: What reading skills do faculty perceive as necessary for their students' success? Which skills are perceived to be most important? To what extent are the perceptions of English, history, and biology faculty similar or different?

Sixty-one faculty from nineteen Texas community colleges completed three Delphi questionnaires for this study. Perceived reading skill needs were rated by levels of importance. Ratings were analyzed by determining medians and interquartile ranges for each identified skill.

All three disciplines rated three reading skills to be essential to their students' success: locating or determining main ideas, following printed directions, and using study time efficiently. Another sixteen skills were rated to be of high importance by all three disciplines: summarizing key ideas, identifying supporting details, organizing ideas by classifying, reading for a specific purpose, formulating generalizations, recognizing the sequence of events, taking notes in class, defining terms used in exam questions, using a table of contents and index, studying textbooks prior to class sessions, using a dictionary, defining and pronouncing terms, using effective listening techniques, developing a positive attitude toward reading and studying, developing an appreciation for reading, and developing an attitude of thoroughness when studying.

These conclusions were drawn: Content area faculty perceived the necessity of a wide variety of comprehension, vocabulary, studying, and library research skills. Faculty rated many reading skills as having very high or high importance. Faculty perceived certain studying, notetaking, test-taking, and listening skills to be synonymous with reading skills. Faculty perceived that positive attitudes regarding reading and studying were necessary. When the disciplines differed about the importance of skills, history and biology faculty often rated them higher than English faculty.

AN EXAMINATION OF VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE PRE-SCHOOLERS' BOOK HANDLING KNOWLEDGE TASK

Order No. DA8326524

CUVO, MARLENE J., PH.D. *Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*, 1983. 71pp. Major Professor: Margaret Keyser Hill

The main goal of this research was to examine the internal consistency, concurrent and predictive validity of the Book Knowledge Task (a non-standardized, informal measure), and determine whether the Book Knowledge Task and the Metropolitan Readiness Test taken together predict future reading success using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test as the criterion variable.

Certain conclusions can be made from the research done for this study: (1) The Book Knowledge Task has a high level of internal consistency. (2) The Book Knowledge Task and the Metropolitan Readiness Test are valid measures of the same skills. (3) Neither the Book Knowledge Task nor the Metropolitan Readiness Test are good predictors of reading success using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test as the criterion variable. (4) The small amount of the variance accounted for by the two readiness measures demonstrates the fact that other variables enter into measuring reading success in addition to readiness and book knowledge skills. (5) Using the two readiness measures together does not significantly add in predicting reading success, than using either alone.

The present research suggests, therefore, that the Book Knowledge Task is an internally consistent instrument. The Book Knowledge Task and the Metropolitan Readiness Test essentially measure the same academic skills. Neither of these assessment devices, however, are good predictors of reading success using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test as the criterion variable. The small amount of variance accounted for by the two readiness measures demonstrates the fact that other variables enter into measuring reading success on the Gates-MacGinitie test in addition to readiness and book knowledge skills. This research further shows that using the Metropolitan Readiness Test and the Book Knowledge Task together as predictors does not significantly add in predicting reading success compared to using either instrument alone.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELECTED LEARNER VARIABLES AND INSTRUCTION BY STUDENT TEACHERS AND READING ACHIEVEMENT ON THE TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF BASIC SKILLS. [RECORD OF STUDY]

Order No. DA8323729

ERWIN, BARBARA KAY, ED.D. *Texas A&M University*, 1983. 264pp. Chairman: Dr. John Morris

Since 1970 the emphasis in education in the state of Texas has been upon the improvement of learner achievement in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. The purpose of this study was to assist one school district in (1) identifying factors which affect learner achievement on the grade five Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS) reading test; and (2) developing a statistical model that will predict the future success of learners on the same test.

Four types of independent variables were investigated in this study. They were (1) learner ability to succeed in school; (2) previous achievement of the learner; (3) demographic data about the learner; and (4) the number of student teachers each learner had been assigned. Each type of variable was analyzed to determine its effect upon learner cognitive attainment on the fifth grade TABS reading subtest.

Data were obtained from the permanent records of the fifth grade population of the Bryan Independent School District. From this population of 696 learners, complete data could be obtained for only

142 learners. An investigation of descriptive statistics for this sample indicated that the sample of 142 learners was representative of the population. Analysis used to examine the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable were: (1) simple correlations to determine the relationships between continuous independent variables and the dependent variable; (2) measures of association between categorical variables and the dependent variable; and (3) Cp and step-up regression procedures to determine which set of independent variables accounted for the greatest percent of variance for the dependent variable and the proportion of the variance that could be attributed to each set of independent variables.

Relationships and/or associations were established between learner IQ; previous achievement measured by normed reference tests, grades, and reading levels; and race and SES levels of the learners' family. These relationships/associations were further investigated to determine which set of variables could be used to provide a predictive model for future learner success on TABS. . . . (Author's abstract exceeds stipulated maximum length. Discontinued here with permission of author.) UMI

CALIFORNIA'S PROFICIENCY LEGISLATION AND THE HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH CURRICULUM: A QUESTION OF IMPACT

Order No. DA8401025

EVANS, MARTHA COFFIN, ED.D. *University of La Verne*, 1983. 135pp.

Problem. Following the 1977 passage of California's proficiency legislation, little data was gathered on its curricular impact. This study focused on assessing seven areas--graduation credit requirements, English credit requirements, course sequence, writing courses, writing sections, course of study, and staff development activities within medium-sized unified and high school districts of 10,000-12,000 student enrollment.

Methodology. A two-part data collection approach was utilized involving a survey questionnaire mailed to the fifty high schools within the identified population. Seventeen follow-up indepth interviews were conducted. Descriptive statistics were applied to collected data for the 1976-77 and 1981-82 school years to determine pre-post legislative impact.

Findings. (1) An increase occurred in graduation credits required with a 1976-77 mean of 210 to 215 for 1981-82. (2) An increase in the English credit requirement showed a mean change from 24 to 35 credits. (3) Forty-one percent of the schools required a structured two year sequence with a move from elective semester offerings to a more traditional program. (4) More writing was emphasized in existing English courses with approximately fifty percent of interviewed schools changing the number of courses offered. (5) Although thirty or more course sections was the mode for both school years, almost one fourth of the interviewed schools changed the number of sections offered during this time. (6) Seventy-one percent of the schools reported changes in course of study descriptions, the top area of impact. (7) Ninety-five percent reported involvement in staff development activities, the second highest area of impact, with forty-seven percent of interviewed schools noting California Writing Project participation.

Conclusions/Recommendations. Though varied in degree, and not the exclusive cause of change, California's proficiency legislation did have an impact upon the assessed areas. This legislation evolved as a result of the back to basics movement which influenced at least another factor existing during this study- the increase in University of California entrance requirements. The increases found within the seven areas encourage further investigation into the qualitative difference of higher requirements now that a quantitative difference has been established.

MEASURING THE ACQUISITION OF READING SKILLS IN FIRST GRADE

Order No. DA8325943

GYGI, JANICE LEMMON, PH.D. *The University of Utah*, 1983. 151pp. Chairman: Gabriel M. Della-Piana

This exploratory study was designed to examine individual patterns of reading acquisition in first grade, to determine which students use a code-oriented approach to reading and which a whole-word approach, and to locate pretests to predict an individual's strategies. Sixty-eight first-grade students were tested 6 times during the year using the Word Lists for Reading Analysis (WLRA) which has 42 phonics word lists, 8 basal word lists, and a set of individual letter tests. The phonics word lists scores at the sixth testing had a Pearson *r* correlation of .89 with the Total Reading score of the California Achievement Tests. The phonics word lists had Spearman *r* correlations of between .64 and .95 with teacher ranking of students for each of the last five testings. Minor changes in the ordering of lists might be useful for future administrations. The WLRA has potential as an instrument for tracking acquisition of specific reading skills and as a research instrument. It was not adequate to assess whether students were using code-oriented or whole-word approaches to reading. The prereading tests did not predict the patterns or strategies students employed in learning to read. There was a wide variety of acquisition patterns among first grade students. Some students had "flashes of insight" and passed 12 or more phonics lists in one testing while other students progressed steadily through the phonics skills. Other students could not read by the end of the year. A formal three-year study might identify learning patterns of students with breakthroughs after first grade and might indicate problems keeping students from having such breakthroughs. A more rigorous research design should identify different strategies of reading and interactions between strategies and instruction. This could be valuable in planning curricula to meet the needs of all students.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF THE HAWK ADOLESCENT LITERATURE ATTITUDE SCALE: ASSESSMENT OF ATTITUDES THAT EDUCATORS, STUDENTS, AND PARENTS HAVE TOWARD CERTAIN POTENTIALLY CENSORABLE TOPICS FOUND IN LITERATURE READ BY ADOLESCENTS

Order No. DA8402900

HAWK, JANE WARD, ED.D. *Auburn University*, 1983. 244pp. Director: Dr. Terry C. Ley

The purpose of this study was to develop and validate an instrument which would measure attitudes that Alabama educators, junior and senior high school students, and parents involved with a school's PTA hold toward certain topics and their treatment in literature read by adolescents. The final instrument, the "Hawk Adolescent Literature Attitude Scale," consisted of 59 items concerning the required and self-selected reading of students enrolled in grades 7-9 and 10-12. Of 3287 surveys distributed in the Spring of 1983, 2743 surveys were returned and analyzed. The demographic variables analyzed were: (1) group (educators, parents, or students), (2) grade level (7-9 or 10-12), (3) race (white/non-white), and (4) sex.

Factor analysis, using an oblique rotation on both required and self-selected reading responses, was executed. Six factors emerged: (1) Interpersonal/Intrapersonal Conflicts, (2) Adherence to Conventional Stereotype, (3) Sexual Relationships, (4) Drug Abuses, (5) Aggressive Behavior and Language, and (6) Commonly Perceived Traditional Values.

Multiple multivariate analyses of variance were computed to determine if significant differences existed among the demographic variables. Where significant differences occurred, univariate analyses of variance were used to determine where differences lay.

Results of the analysis indicated that respondents were more conservative with regard to students in grades 7-9 than with regard to students in grades 10-12; females tended to answer more conservatively than males; and whites answered more conservatively than non-whites on all six factors with regard to required reading and

on the first three factors for self-selected reading. The first three factors were identical for required and self-selected reading.

With regard to the interaction effects analyzed, it was found that five of the six factors had a significant interaction for the group by sex effect; one of the six factors had a significant interaction for the group by race effect; and two of the six factors had a significant interaction for the sex by race effect.

USING THREE FORMATS OF THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL TO DETERMINE THE MOST RELIABLE FORMAT OF THE TECHNIQUE AMONG KENYAN AND AMERICAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN AND INVESTIGATE THE DIMENSIONALITY OF THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD READING

Order No. DA8324732

INGULE, FRANK OYUNGU, PH.D. *Michigan State University*, 1983. 185pp.

Three-point, five-point and seven-point formats of the Semantic Differential technique were used to rate the concept of READING by American and African fourth to seventh grade children. The purpose of the study was to identify the most reliable formats of the Semantic Differential for the various grades and determine whether the technique identifies the same factors (dimensions) and factor structures among the American and African children selected for the study.

The American subjects were selected from two schools in Lansing, Michigan while the African subjects were selected from two schools in Kenya (East Africa). A total of 448 American and African children participated in this study.

The results showed that among the American subjects, five-point and seven-point formats were more reliable than the three-point format. The five-point format was more reliable in the African fourth and fifth grade than the three-point and seven-point formats. However, in sixth and seventh African grades, the five-point and seven-point formats were equally reliable but more reliable than the three-point format. The three-point format was consistently less reliable than the five-point and seven-point formats among both the African and American subjects.

The factors identified among the American subjects, in their order of importance, were, Evaluation, Difficulty (Potency), and Usefulness (Activity). The same factors were identified as characterizing the attitudes of African subjects toward reading but the order of these factors were changed. Factor I among the African subjects was Usefulness (Activity), Factor II was Evaluation and Factor III was Difficulty (Potency).

Results of the factor reliabilities showed that the most reliable factor among the American subjects was Evaluation, followed by Difficulty (Potency), then Usefulness (Activity). The most reliable factor among the African subjects was Usefulness, followed by Evaluation and then Difficulty

The results of this research cannot be generalized beyond the subjects used because it is based on a fixed design model. The information on the dimensions is restricted to READING since this was the concept that was rated.

SHORT AND LONG-TERM RETENTION OF SIGHT WORDS BY FIRST GRADE STUDENTS TAUGHT BY TEACHER ASSISTANTS WHO HAD BEEN TRAINED BY LECTURE-DISCUSSION, PEER TEACHING, AND INDEPENDENT STUDY

Order No. DA8327908

KNIGHT, LELAND STANFORD, ED.D. *Brigham Young University*, 1983. 137pp. Chairman: James W. Dunn

It was the purpose of this study to compare three college teaching methods, lecture-discussion, peer teaching, and independent study to find out which might be the most effective in training college students. University students were taught how to teach by the three different methods and were tested on their knowledge. They then each taught six first grade students ten sight words and the elementary pupils were tested as to their short and long-term retention.

The findings were that neither lecture-discussion nor peer teaching nor independent study was more significantly effective in teaching college students and that college students taught by the three methods produced no greater gains in the sight vocabulary of first grade students regardless of the training method.

A DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS TO PERFORMANCE ON MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTS IN READING AND MATHEMATICS

Order No. DA8404002

KROEN, WILLIAM CHARLES, JR., D.ED. *Boston College*, 1983. 147pp. Adviser: Dr. Vincent C. Nuccio

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of student characteristics to performance on minimum competency tests in Reading and Mathematics. The collection of data was limited to those found in a student's cumulative record. The variables selected were: race, sex, parents' occupation, performance on the *Stanford Achievement Test in Reading and Mathematics*, the *Otis Lennon Test of Mental Ability*, grade point average, attendance and teacher judgement of academic ability.

The sample consisted of 234 eighth grade students from two schools in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The sample reflects a lower-middle class, urban population of eighth graders.

Based on performance, students were grouped into "At Risk" (failing) and "Pass". Discriminant function analysis was used to ascertain which variables as stated above related to performance. Prediction as to group membership was obtained for the 1981 and the 1982 samples for both tests. Additionally, 1981 tests data were used to predict group membership in the 1982 sample and each variable was analyzed independently for strength of prediction. For the Reading Tests, the variables of performance on the Stanford Achievement test in Reading, the Otis-Lennon Test of Mental Ability and grade point average were selected in a stepwise procedure as the predictor set for determining group membership. The predicted group membership for the Reading Test yielded an accuracy rate of 81.20% with 87.3% of the "At Risk" students correctly classified. For the Mathematics test, the variables of performance on the Stanford Achievement test in Mathematics, grade point average and attendance were selected. An overall accuracy rate of 82.48% was obtained in regard to predicting group membership with 90.6% of the "At Risk" students correctly classified. For predicting results from the 1981 data, an overall accuracy rate of 88.5% was obtained for the Reading Test and an 84.2% rate was obtained for the Mathematics Test.

The findings indicate that schools currently hold the data to predict performance on minimum competency tests to a high degree and possess the ability to identify students who are at risk of failing such tests.

A COMPARISON OF SIXTH GRADE THAI AND AMERICAN STUDENTS ON TWO FORMS OF THE CLOZE PROCEDURE: REGULAR CLOZE, SYNONYMIC CLOZE

Order No. DA8324922

LOANGSITONGSOOG, SIRIPORN, PH.D. *The Florida State University*, 1983. 103pp. Major Professor: Edwin H. Smith

The purpose of this study was to investigate if there were similarities and differences between sixth grade Thai and American students' performances on two types of cloze tests: exact-word cloze and synonymic cloze.

The subjects consisted of 106 sixth graders from two schools: The Developmental Research School (DRS) of the College of Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida and the Ayuthaya Teachers' College demonstration school in Ayuthaya, Thailand. The instruments for the American subjects were four social studies

passages of 278 to 296 words selected from three adopted social studies textbooks. An every fifth word cloze test was constructed from each of the four passages. The instruments for Thai subjects were four cloze passages translated from the English version used by their American counterparts.

The cloze passages both in Thai and English were scored twice by the investigator, first by exact-word scoring and then by synonymic scoring. The mean scores of the two types of cloze tests (exact-word and synonymic) were translated into the corresponding comprehension levels: independent 60%-100%, instructional 40%-59%, and frustration below 40%. The null hypotheses were tested through the utilization of the *t*-test.

Results of the testing showed that the synonymic scoring resulted in a wider range of scores than did the exact-word scoring; hence, synonymic scoring was more useful in terms of predicting each subject's reading ability. The conclusions were: (1) The reading process in Thai is similar to the reading process in English with meaning rather than letters and words being central to the process. (2) At least beyond the beginning reading phase, both Thais and Americans read to determine deep structure rather than surface structure. (3) Sixth grade demonstration school Thai and American students read in their respective languages equally well. (4) The study supports the top down theory of reading at the readability level tested.

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS LOCATED IN THE FIVE BASAL READERS ADOPTED BY THE STATE OF TEXAS

Order No. DA8327047

MELTON, LYNDA GAYLE WHITE, PH.D. *North Texas State University*, 1983. 231pp.

The purpose of this study was to identify and compare the specific writing assignments provided in the five basal readers, grades one through eight, adopted by the state of Texas. These seventy-eight basal reader's guides were first analyzed for statements indicating specific writing assignments. The total number of writing assignments in each of the teacher's guides were totaled for each publisher. The location of each writing assignment which supported the TABS categories was recorded. The writing assignments which did not support the TABS categories were assigned appropriate categories and recorded on a table. Another table compared the five publishers and the total number of writing assignments supporting the TABS categories. A fifth table compared the five publishers and the total number of writing assignments found in other categories not supporting the TABS categories.

Within the limitations of this study, the following conclusions have been formulated. Forty-one to sixty per cent of the total writing assignments from all the basals, which supported the TABS, were in the Expressive/Narrative category. Three to seventeen per cent of the writing assignments were in the Informative/Descriptive category. Six to twenty-four per cent of the total writing assignments were in the Informative/Narrative category. Nine to ten per cent were in the Expressive/Descriptive category.

The total number of assignments varied, among the publishers, from 101 to 437. Out of the total number of assignments, ninety-seven to 378 supported the TABS. Five to fourteen per cent of the total were combinations of purpose/modes other than the ones supporting the TABS.

Though all the five publishers made statements supporting an integrated language arts approach, only Harcourt Brace Jovanovich and Scott Foresman included writing in the Scope and Sequence and index. The percentage of writing assignments in each grade level varied among the publishers. Both the lower and upper grades had fewer assignments than the middle grades.

A STUDY OF THE READING COMPETENCY GRADUATION TESTS IN SIXTEEN DISTRICTS IN A COUNTY IN CALIFORNIA

MINTON, MARILYN JOY, ED.D. *University of Southern California*, 1983. Chair: Professor Grayce A. Ransom

The passage of AB 65 in California in 1977 required that after June 1980 students demonstrate proficiency in basic skills prior to receiving a high school diploma and that local districts select or develop measures or procedures to assess student proficiency.

Purpose. The purpose was to describe and compare reading competency tests which were developed or selected to assess reading proficiency for high school graduation in June 1981.

Procedures. Three assessment instruments were developed and used: a Reading Skills Analysis Matrix, a Source Materials Analysis Matrix, and an interview questionnaire. Test items were classified using the matrices. A person responsible for competency testing in each district was interviewed. Test item analysis was validated by two reading specialists. Reading difficulty was assessed using the Fry Readability Index.

Findings. Reading difficulty levels vary greatly between and within tests. Competency tests primarily assess literal reading comprehension and study skills. Little emphasis is given to evaluation skills and no assessment is made of student response in the affective domain. The most frequently used source materials are non-fiction expository writing and references such as dictionaries and telephone directories. Districts are equally divided in their use of criterion-referenced and single, total score passing criteria. Community involvement does not affect test difficulty.

Conclusions. (1) Reading difficulty variability can be attributed to a desire not to specify reading grade level and to allow source material to determine reading level. (2) Most assessment instruments use material encountered in daily living. (3) Small districts experience difficulty in developing tests due to limited financial resources and trained personnel. (4) The most positive impact of minimum competency testing has been increased dialogue between the school and the community and the clarification of educational goals and objectives.

Recommendations. It is recommended that: (1) a study be made of the effect of competency testing upon the curriculum; (2) greater financial and technical assistance be provided to small districts; (3) the procedures for setting standards be further studied to establish their reliability and to provide models for districts to use when developing or modifying competency tests.

(Copies available from Micrographics Department, Doheny Library, USC, Los Angeles, CA 90089.)

THE EFFECTS OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED TEXT AND READER STUDY BEHAVIOR ON MEASURES OF READING COMPREHENSION

Order No. DA8404227

REINKING, DAVID PAUL, PH.D. *University of Minnesota*, 1983. 253pp.

This study investigated the use of the computer to affect reading comprehension among intermediate-grade readers. Technological attributes of the computer when compared to standard printed material were hypothesized to afford a more interactive medium for written communication. The computer was used, therefore, to provide textual manipulations not readily available in printed text and which were aimed at increasing comprehension.

A computer program was written which displayed short expository passages and which permitted a reader to request textual manipulations modeled after some of the interactive characteristics of oral communication. Readers could use the computer to request the definition of selected words, a simplified version of the passage, more background information, and the main idea of each paragraph. The performance of readers having these options was compared to readers reading the same text (a) on printed pages, (b) on a computer with no options for textual manipulations, or (c) on a computer with all textual manipulations being viewed after reading the text.

One-hundred four, intermediate-grade readers were blocked on the basis of reading ability and randomly assigned to one of the four

treatment conditions. Dependent measures included cummulative scores on multiple-choice questions answered after each passage, a post-experimental standardized comprehension test, and a vocabulary test containing words from the experimental passages. A mixed factorial ANOVA was employed to compare performance on these measures across treatment, reading ability, and passage difficulty. Chi squares were also computed to compare the manipulations selected. Results indicated a significant treatment effect on passage scores and vocabulary knowledge but not on the standardized comprehension measure. A significant interaction between treatment and passage difficulty was also evidenced on the passage comprehension measure. Subjects also selected background information significantly more often than the other manipulations.

A major conclusion was that the comprehension of intermediate-grade readers may increase when the computer is used to control the presentation of textual manipulations. This conclusion is consistent with research documenting metacognitive deficiencies among younger readers. This study also demonstrated the feasibility of using the computer to gather data on reading and study behavior.

ENGLISH TEACHER CONCERNS ABOUT MINIMAL-COMPETENCY-TESTING GRADUATION REQUIREMENT: CURRICULAR IMPACT Order No. DA8401236

ROARK, VICTORIA VISCHAN, PH.D. *The University of Alabama*, 1983. 117pp.

Minimal Competency Testing (MCT) has been spurred on by concern about declining test scores and graduates who did not possess basic life-skills. The MCT movement asks for assurance that certain minimum basic skills have been achieved before students are graduated from high school. Educators have cited numerous concerns about such programs, including fears about curriculum modifications associated with such requirements. The purpose of this study was to determine the concerns of English teachers regarding the implementation of the Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE) and to assess its impact on the secondary school English curricula.

The population for this study was comprised of teachers from the 58 randomly selected high schools in which the AHSGE was piloted in November, 1982, who taught one or more English classes. A maximum of five teachers were randomly selected from each school. The return rate was 72%, consisting of 152 teachers. Within the sample there was a balance among the grade levels taught. The majority were in their thirties, and had taught more than ten years.

The measure of resistance was based on the Stages of Concern Questionnaire developed by Hall, George, and Rutherford, 1977. This instrument utilized scores on seven stages of implementation and provided a series of patterns indicative of resistance or acceptance. The respondents did show a tendency toward resistance as identified by the graphic profile. Approximately one-third of the respondents indicated modification prior to the pilot administration and two-thirds indicated anticipating utilizing additional changes for subsequent administrations. The most frequently cited changes were remediation activities. Numerous specific concerns about the loss of time and its effect on literature instruction and other enrichment activities were noted.

A point-biserial test for association between the percentage of students teachers indicated would be unable to pass the AHSGE and actual curricular modifications they had made was significant. However the test for association between the percentage teachers indicated and the anticipated curricular modifications was not significant. This, in conjunction with the identified tendency toward resistance, would seem to indicate that teachers anticipated employing curricular modifications based on minimal competency requirements regardless of the needs of the individual student.

STANDARDIZATION OF THE CLOZE READING INVENTORY AS A MEASURE OF READING COMPREHENSION IN THE ODD GRADES 3 THROUGH 11 Order No. DA8328214

SULLIVAN, VICKI GALLO, ED.D. *University of New Orleans*, 1983. 220pp.

The Cloze Reading Inventory (CRI), developed by De Santi, is composed of original, graded cloze passages covering the elementary and secondary grades, and a modified cloze scoring procedure designed to provide the classroom teacher with diagnostic/evaluative information about their students' general reading comprehension ability as well as more specific information about each reader's ability to process text. The interpretive categories (TRAD, TOTAL, LOG and GRAM) are based on the coding of the semantic and syntactic acceptability of each student response. The purpose of this study was to standardize this set of assessment materials so that the CRI could be confidently employed by classroom teachers as a measure of their students' ability to comprehend.

Four alternate passage forms (A, B, C and D) wre written at each of five grade levels (3, 5, 7, 9 and 11). Special attention was paid to passage appeal and readability.

As part of the standardization process, the inter-rater reliability and reliability of the score of a single rater were investigated because of the subjectivity inherent in interpreting results. Alternate forms reliability of the CRI was calculated and concurrent validity established with the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) that was administered within two weeks of the CRI.

The 456 students participating in this study were selected from a large urban school system. Each group of subjects was administered one cloze passage during each of four testing sessions.

The results of this study indicate that the CRI passages and interpretive procedure can provide teachers with a valid and reliable measure of reading comprehension, although some refinements have been suggested. As well, there is a tendency for correlation coefficients to appear stronger in the elementary grades.

Significant mean differences at the .05 level of significance were found at all grade levels suggesting that certain forms at each grade level may require revision or elimination if they are to be used as pre- and posttests. There is also the need for greater specificity in scoring directions, especially in the GRAM category.

A STUDY OF THE PREDICTIVE VALUE OF THE *DIAGNOSTIC READING SCALES* AND THE *WOODCOCK READING MASTERY TESTS* FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL BASAL PLACEMENT Order No. DA8402766

ZECCHIN, SANDRA, PH.D. *The University of Tennessee*, 1983. 22?pp. Major Professor: Dr. J. Estill Alexander

The present inquiry assessed the predictive value of the DRS and WRMT in the determination of instructional reading levels for basal placement. The rationale for this study was that teachers who receive clinical reports from reading specialists designating instructional level may place the student in the basal reader corresponding to the report's stated instructional level. This study sought to determine if children placed in basal materials on the instructional grade level(s) diagnosed by the WRMT and DRS would be capable of reading selections from those materials. Comprehension scores of 75% or greater constituted "fit" or correct basal placement by the tests.

The DRS and WRMT were administered to 30 fourth grade students randomly selected from the Knoxville, Tennessee, City School System. Following the tests, the students were placed in basal readers at the instructional level(s) indicated by the tests. Each child read two basal passages per diagnosed instructional level. The first passage was read orally and followed by comprehension questions asked orally. The second passage was read silently and also followed by oral comprehension questions. Students exhibited greater difficulty comprehending materials read silently than materials read orally.

The examiner found that the percentage rate of successful placement for the DRS was 43% for oral reading, and only 23% for

silent reading. The WRMT was found to place successfully in 50% of the cases for oral reading and 20% for silent reading.

The results of this analysis suggest that both the DRS and WRMT were limited in their ability to predict instructional reading levels for basal placement. Furthermore, these tests largely ignore the interpersonal relationship between student and examiner, a relationship which can provide useful information for assessing appropriate reading levels.

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